

AOT In Action - Issue 269 - June 22, 2009



Hereford, Arizona

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## Message from Director Sherry Henry

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Good afternoon,

Last year, the Arizona Office of Tourism launched the Arizona Accreditation Program (AZAP), an online training program designed to certify U.S. and Canadian travel agents as “specialists” on the Grand Canyon State.

Since the start of this innovative program, nearly 800 travel agents have signed up - 600 of which have become Arizona specialists.

AZAP has been an incredible program for the promotion of our state as a travel destination. It provides such a tremendous opportunity for travel agents to become more familiar with the amazing travel experiences found only in Arizona. For more information and to access the program, visit the [Travel Professionals](#) web page on [www.arizonaguide.com](http://www.arizonaguide.com).

Have a great week.

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### AOT News

#### New Updates to AOT's Research Web site!

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

- [Gross Sales and Tourism Taxes April 2009](#)
- [National Park Visitation April 2009](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Billings, Research Specialist, at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at [bbillings@azot.gov](mailto:bbillings@azot.gov).

**Save the Date: 2009 Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism July 8-10**

Be sure to register for the 2009 Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism, July 8-10! The event will be held at The Westin Kierland Resort and Spa in Phoenix. The program is a dynamic mix of fresh industry information and resources that can help you plan for another year of marketing Arizona to audiences around the world. Breakout sessions and speakers will teach you how to take tourism marketing and promotion to a new level. With so many exciting opportunities happening nationally, the Arizona Office of Tourism and its association partners are committed to bringing you the most up-to-date tools available for tourism professionals.

For more information and to register for the event, please visit [www.aztourismconference.com](http://www.aztourismconference.com).

**Don't Forget to Keep Posting Your Summer Travel Deals!**

AOT, in partnership with the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association and statewide industry partners, launched our new summer campaign on May 12. The campaign will showcase the amazing summer travel deals found throughout Arizona. If you want your travel deal promoted, this is your chance! Upload your travel deals and packages to the Travel Deals section of [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov). There is no charge to list a package on the Travel Deals section.

If you are experiencing issues with uploading your travel deals or have any questions about the process, please contact Marjorie Magnusson at 602-364-3695 or via e-mail at [mmagnusson@azot.gov](mailto:mmagnusson@azot.gov).

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## Upcoming Events

**[Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism](#)**

Date: July 8 - 10

Location: The Westin Kierland Resort and Spa, Phoenix

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## Industry News

**A Message from Roger Dow, President of the U.S. Travel Association**

Our industry experienced the legislative process at work today when a procedural vote in the Senate resulted in the Travel Promotion Act being set aside for the moment. It is not unusual for legislation to temporarily stall in the U.S. Senate due to procedural hurdles as compromises are found. But now is not the time for our industry to rest. We are close and can get this legislation done with your continued support. This is a test of our commitment to ensuring that the travel community is respected. To see our statement, [click here](#).

In his remarks today, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid specifically asked that constituents reach out to their Senators and urge passage of the legislation. Our best chance to see this passed will be the result an industry-wide push to urge support from Senators across all 50 states.

We need you to continue contacting your Senators and urge your colleagues to do likewise. Please use the tools below to contact your Senators and urge them to pass S. 1023, the Travel Promotion Act.

This packet includes the following helpful tools:

- [Summary of the Travel Promotion Act](#)
- [Detailed talking points on travel promotion](#)
- [Letter to send to your Senators](#)
- [Sample script for making a phone call to your Senators](#) ([click here](#) to find your Senators' contact information)
- [Senators who have cosponsored and NOT cosponsored S. 1023](#)

#### **U.S. Treasury Publishes TARP Travel Rules**

Last week, the U.S. Treasury Department published new rules in the Federal Register governing some meeting, event, incentive and travel expenses for companies that received Troubled Asset Relief Program funds. >> [Read Full Article](#)

#### **Survey Finds Some Cutting Back on Summer Travels**

Summer travels are still on the agenda for many this season, but the recession has impacted more than a few people's jet-set plans. >> [Read Full Article](#)

#### **Major U.S. Airlines Raise Fares \$20**

Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines and other major U.S. carriers have raised fares \$20 round-trip in the first successful price increase for most domestic routes this year. >> [Read Full Article](#)

#### **Planes, Trains...and Buses?**

It's the new face of bus travel. After years as the ugly stepchild of intercity transportation thanks to its long-held reputation as unfriendly, uncomfortable and tawdry-bus travel is bouncing back, says The Wall Street Journal. >> [Read Full Article](#)

#### **Winner Named in "Faces of Travel" Contest**

The U.S. Travel Association announced Wednesday that Paco Saldana, director of guest services at the Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, has been selected as the new "Face of Travel." >> [Read Full Article](#)

#### **USTOA Survey Finds Tour Prices Down 20%**

Tour operators have lowered prices an average of 20 percent compared to 2008 on many vacations, in response to the soft economy and stronger U.S. dollar in many destinations, according to the U.S. Tour Operators Association. >> [Read Full Article](#)

#### **Travel Promotion Act Introduced in House**

Legislation introduced in the House last week would encourage more international travelers to the U.S. and fund an advertising campaign at the cost of those same globe-trotters it would target. >> [Read Full Article](#)

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#### **Calendar of Events**

Visit [www.ArizonaGuide.com](http://www.ArizonaGuide.com) to find information on all the exciting events, festivals and activities held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

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